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Strategic Planning Development Team

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PSU leadership meeting outlines strategic plan implementation
Portland State's strategic plan has become the guiding document for changes and policy decisions at the university, Provost Sona Andrews told the Annual Leadership Planning Session.

About 80 campus leaders and representatives attended the session late last week to learn about ways the plan is being used.

"We are now deep into the implementation phase," Andrews said. One of the most important components of the plan, she said, is the decision to use an equity lens on all key decisions.

Equity lens: About half of the time spent in the ALPS session was on learning how to use and apply the equity lens, which is meant to help ensure that decisions take into account the impact on traditionally marginalized people. The lens boils down to a set of questions to ask before moving forward. Among them:

- Who are the people at the table? Have those who might experience disparities been included?
- Does the policy or decision improve, worsen or make no change to existing disparities?
- What is the real impact vs. the intended impact of the decision?

Student success: A number of student success initiatives are well under way. Details of a handful were unveiled during the session. Goal 1 of the plan calls on PSU to "put students first" by ensuring a clear path to a degree, offering excellent courses and containing costs, among other goals.

Among the initiatives outlined were:

- Bachelor's plus master's program that allows some high-achieving undergraduates to apply up to 15 graduate-level credits toward a master's degree. The aim is to make it faster and less expensive to obtain a master's degree.

- Reducing barriers and improving services to help students graduate. Includes coordinated services; interactive degree maps; redesigned, one-stop web page; and redesigned advising program.
- Addressing writing deficiencies, focusing on culturally and linguistically diverse students. The goal is to increase student retention by improving writing skills among a targeted group.

“Doing our strategic plan was hard work,” Andrews said. “Implementing the plan is even harder work. We’re going to have to make some tough choices about what we do and don’t do. I hope the plan guides us in that work.”

